

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-26, 33-36, and 38-47 are pending. Claims 1, 6, 9, 16-18, 23, 24, 33, 34, 36, 40, 42, and 45-47 have been amended, and claim 22 has been canceled in this reply. No new claims have been added. Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-21, 23-26, 33-36, and 38-47 therefore will be pending upon entry of the above amendments.

The Examiner has objected to the use of the term “contact fingers 32” because the figures do not depict the contact fingers 32 as having a free end. Applicants respectfully submit that one skilled in the art of connector design would not understand the term “contact finger” to require a free end, as discussed in the reply of December 22, 2004. In the interest of advancing prosecution of the application, however, the term “contact finger” has been changed to “contact” throughout the specification and claims.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-11, 17-26, 33-36, 38-41, and 45 have been objected to because of various formalities set forth in the office action. Applicants thank the Examiner for bringing these informalities to Applicants’ attention. The claims have been amended, where appropriate, to address the objections.

Claims 1, 6, 11, 25, 26, 33-36, 38-43, and 45 have been rejected in the office action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. patent no. 6,663,426 (Hasircoglu) in view of U.S. patent no. 5,434,362 (Klosowiak). Claims 22-24 and 44 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Hasircoglu in view of Klosowiak, and further in view of U.S. patent no. 6,083,047 (Paagman). Claim 22 has been canceled, thereby rendering this rejection moot with respect to that claim. Claim 47 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Hasircoglu.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 13-16 and 46 by the Examiner. Applicants also gratefully acknowledge the Examiner’s statement that claims 5, 9, 10, and 17-21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 has been amended in this reply to recite a portion of the printed circuit board extends from the housing in a first direction, the printed circuit board having a flexible portion, the flexible portion being thinner than a remainder of the printed circuit board and extending substantially in the first direction so that the portion of the printed circuit board can

translate in a second direction in relation to the housing, the second direction being substantially perpendicular to the first direction. Support for this amendment can be found, *inter alia*, in paragraph [0096] of the original application.

The rigidizer plate (20) of Klosowiak has channels (24), (25) formed therein. The channels (24), (25) facilitate bending of end portions (21), (22) of the rigidizer plate (20) about bend axes (26), (27). The channels (24), (25) do not extend substantially in a first direction so that the end portions of the rigidizer plate translate in a second direction in relation to a housing (or any other structure), where the second direction is substantially perpendicular to the first direction. Rather, the end portions pivot about the bend axes, which appear coincident with the channels. Klosowiak spec. at col. 2, lines 65-68; col. 3, lines 1-12; Figures 1-3.

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that Klosowiak neither teaches nor suggests a printed circuit board extending from a housing in a first direction, the printed circuit board having a flexible portion, the flexible portion being thinner than a remainder of the printed circuit board and extending substantially in the first direction so that the portion of the printed circuit board can translate in a second direction in relation to the housing, the second direction being substantially perpendicular to the first direction. Hasircoglu likewise neither teaches nor suggests these limitations. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentably distinct from the combination of Klosowiak and Hasircoglu.

Claim 45 of the present application has been amended to recite the printed circuit board having a flexible portion formed therein that permits the end portion of the circuit board to deflect in a first direction in relation to the housing, the flexible portion of the printed circuit board being thinner than a remainder of the printed circuit board and extending substantially in a second direction, the second direction being substantially perpendicular to the first direction. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claim 45 is patentably distinct from the combination of Klosowiak and Hasircoglu, for at least the reasons stated above in relation to claim 1.

Claim 42 of the present application recites, *inter alia*, a plug comprising a first housing, a first printed circuit board at least partially mounted in the first housing so that a portion of the first printed circuit board extends from the first housing in a first direction and can flex in relation to the first housing in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the

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first direction, the portion of the first printed circuit board being thinner than a remainder of the first printed circuit board. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claim 42 is patentably distinct from the combination of Klosowiak and Hasircoglu, for at least the reasons stated above in relation to claim 1.

Claim 47 recites “the printed circuit board having a wave-shaped flexible portion that permits the portion of the printed circuit board to translate in relation to the housing.” The Examiner contends that Figures 8B and 8C of Hariscoglu show the flex portion (112) of the wafer (110) as being wave shaped. Applicants respectfully disagree with this characterization. In the interest of advancing prosecution of the application, however, claim 47 has been amended to recite “the printed circuit board having a flexible portion having an undulating shape that permits the portion of the printed circuit board to translate in relation to the housing.” Support for this amendment can be found, *inter alia*, in Figure 13 of the original application. Applicants respectfully submit that the flex portion (112) of the wafer (110) of the Hariscoglu connector (100) does not have an undulating shape. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claim 47 is patentably distinct from Hasircoglu.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 42, 45, and 47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and remarks. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 11, 25, 26, 33-36, 38-41, and 43, which depend from claims 1 or 42, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is also requested.

A notice of allowability is respectfully requested.

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